

Marathon sponsored an essay contest for seventh graders in Boyd and Greenup counties to have students explain what "Kentucky Unbridled Spirit" means to them. Several hundred students responded, and the top three essay writers, plus 13 students who won honorable mentions, were honored at the Capitol on Tuesday, March 7.

First place went to Jessica White of Fairview Middle School in Boyd County. She was awarded a \$400 savings bond, and her school received \$1,000.

Second place went to Simeon Cox of Rose Hill Middle School in Boyd County. He was awarded a \$200 savings bond and his school received \$750.

Third place was awarded to Bryson Miller of Wurtland Middle School in Greenup County. He received a \$100 savings bond, and his school was awarded \$500.

Unbridled Spirit: What It Means to Me

Author: Jessica White – First Place

School: Fairview Middle School

Teacher: Ms. Gibson

Unbridled Spirit



"Kentucky's Unbridled Spirit" is the new slogan for our state and our new license plates. It replaces the smiley-faced sunshine and the phrase, "It's that friendly." I would agree that Kentucky is friendly, but that phrase seems a little generic for a place that's as special as the Bluegrass State.

When I first think of unbridled spirit, I think of the people of Kentucky. Whether you are talking about the farmers, the teachers, the CEO's or anyone in

between, the people of our state have a great spirit toward hard work. People take pride in their jobs, no matter what color their collar is, and they work together in a spirit of teamwork to accomplish great things for their communities. A great example of this would be my dad, who has a regular job as a prison recreation specialist, also coaches high school football, and also teaches speed, strength and agility training for kids in his "spare" time. It takes an unbridled spirit to hold three jobs and be a father to five kids!

Another example of the spirit of our people is witnessed on the athletic fields and gymnasiums across the state. From the Junior Football League to the Lexington Legends, no one can match our team spirit! Ever check out a game at Rupp Arena? How about a game at Papa John's Stadium? The spirit will deafen you! But you don't

have to go to Churchill Downs on Derby Day or to Applebee's Park to find team spirit. You can find it at any high school football field, YMCA soccer game or little league baseball diamond across Kentucky. Our people support and thrive on the spirit of competition and sportsmanship!

People of Kentucky also have an unbridled helping spirit. You don't have to look far in my hometown of Ashland, Kentucky to find teamwork of a whole other kind. At each school, family resource centers are set up to help families less fortunate with clothing, school supplies, or food. Community kitchens, abuse shelters, homeless shelters, counseling centers, and clinics are an easily found part of our community. But beyond that, our people have a genuine spirit of generosity that comes, I believe, from having to work hard for what you have, so you appreciate it more and are more mindful of the needs of others. In my youth group at church and the civic club I belong to in school, I have never come across an individual who was not willing to lend a helping hand when called upon. That says a great deal about the truly important unbridled spirit of Kentucky: the spirit of kindness.

Maybe our spirit also comes from the beautiful places of Kentucky. Maybe you've hiked through Natural Bridge in the fall, with the leaves swirling in all colors around you, or walked the musty, giant caverns of Mammoth Cave, nervously listening for the flutter of the bats' wings. Maybe you've fished on the cool, still waters of Cave Run Lake in summer while the sun bakes your skin and you bob peacefully in the boat, or stood at the rail of Keeneland on a warm spring day, watching the ladies in their colorful hats and the jockeys in their more colorful silk jerseys bring beautiful horses thundering like an earthquake past you; no matter where you may have been in Kentucky, any of those places will bring out a spirit of pride, awe, and appreciation in anyone who gets to enjoy such beauty.

I believe that whoever chose the new slogan for Kentucky has "hit the nail on the head" as my mom says, because in the words of a cheer I used to do as a little kid: "We got spirit, yes we do, we got spirit, how 'bout YOU!!!"

Unbridled Spirit: What It Means to Me

Author: Simeon Cox – Second Place

School: Rose Hill Christian School

Teacher: Ms. Pat Tate

Unbridled Spirit



A trinity of Unbridled Spirit shows how three people started out with nothing and came out successful. The first person I will talk about is a black woman, born in a dark period for black people. Her name was Mae Street Kidd. Mae was born in 1904, in Millersburg, Kentucky. Her mother was a beautiful woman, mixed African, Indian, and white blooded. Her

father was a white farmer from the adjoining Harrison County.

During World War II she was in England with the American Red Cross. When she was twenty-one she became a successful business woman. She worked for a black owned and operated Mammoth Life Insurance Company. Later on in Mae's life, she got into politics. She served for seventeen years in the Kentucky General Assembly. As a representative from Louisville's forty-first legislative district, she was called "Lady of the House".

We are moving now from a woman politician to another Unbridled Spirit, a male politician. That man's name is Julian Carroll. The third child born in April of 1931 was named Julian Morton Carroll. Reared, with help from his paternal grandmother, Mammy O. Julian's nickname was "Boo" or "Boostum" after a popular comic strip.

The two most important influences in his life were politics and religion, both came from Mammy O. Julian was saved in his teens at a youth revival at Millburn Chapel. Julian Carroll was elected governor in 1975 by one hundred ninety thousand votes; the largest margin in Kentucky history. Julian has run for office nine times. Julian was elected Speaker of the House of Representatives at the age of thirty-six. Lastly, Julian Carroll was voted into the Senate in 2004.

Again, we are moving from one Unbridled Spirit to another, from politics to chicken. That man is Colonel Harland Sanders. When the Colonel was six years old, his father died. That meant his mom had to go to work. Therefore, Colonel had to do most of the cooking. At the age of ten he got his first job on a farm making two dollars a month.

At the age of forty, Colonel Sanders cooked for travelers that would come by the service station that he owned and ran. As time went by, more people started coming in for his food. Soon after, he moved to a restaurant attached to a motel that seated 142 people. Colonel Sanders food business continues to blossom, until Governor Ruby Laffoon made him a Kentucky Colonel in 1935.

The great business that we all know as Kentucky Fried Chicken began with a sixty-five year old gentleman who used his one-hundred-five dollar Social Security check to fulfill a dream. The Colonel started his franchising of Kentucky Fried Chicken in 1952. By 1964, the Colonel had over six hundred franchising outlets for chicken. More than one billion of the chicken dinners are served annually nationwide. We can learn so much from these three Unbridled Spirits from the great state of Kentucky, Mae Street Kidd, Governor Julian Carroll, and Colonel Harland Sanders. One, never give-up! Each person never gave up even through the worst of times. Another, lesson learned is courage. These three people had courage to see their dreams far away and keep going. We all need the strength and courage that this trinity of Unbridled Spirits had to make our dreams come true.

Unbridled Spirit: What It Means to Me

Author: Bryson Miller – Third Place

School: Wurtland Middle School

Teacher: David Antis

Unbridled Spirit



In the family room of my home, a picture hangs over the fireplace. It depicts a scene of two frontiersmen overlooking a beautiful valley, peering at the wonder of our great state. The cool rivers are flowing through lush, green grasses. The sun illuminates another day of adventure for the two young men, as they rush to meet their dreams, and make discoveries in what will become the great commonwealth we know today. I have learned of some of these early Kentucky settlers since I

was in elementary school, and I have always admired them for their determination, and envied them the adventure they were able to experience when our state was still virtually a "happy hunting ground." How exciting that must have been, to live long, rewarding days making discoveries, settling new land, and creating an environment for the generations to come! Settlers such as Daniel Boone were examples of what Kentuckians are: spirited individuals who are willing to do whatever it takes to fulfill their dreams. The spirit of Kentucky, however, did not die with the first frontiersmen to settle our state, it continues today in the hearts of many who are still going where their dreams have led.

One of Kentucky's unbridled spirits hails from my hometown. Jesse Stuart is a world-renowned author, writing of the people and the land he knew. He was able to bring to life the beauty of the area I call home, in a way the rest of the world could appreciate. His characters bring to life the hardiness of our people. We are not "simple" people in Eastern Kentucky; we are simply people with big hearts who are willing to help others while reaching the goals we have set. Through the power of the pen, Mr. Stuart was able to make Kentucky proud with his various awards, and recognition. It makes me proud when I see one of his stories about our area in our literature book.

Throughout our state, we see examples of the innovative mind of fellow Kentuckians. This past summer, my family and I visited the state capitol. While there, I was impressed with many things. The architecture inside the capitol is inspiring. The columns, vaulted ceilings, and grandness show the planning of former generations who had the vision to produce something still a work of beauty today. The state homemakers have designed a quilt hanging in the capitol which depicts a hand-stitched memento of every county in the state. Each county has an image of something unique to that particular part of the state. Our state is kind of like that quilt: we are all unique individuals bound together by the common thread of our commonwealth. Each of us is kind of special, but together we are able to accomplish much more.

The Louisville Slugger factory tour shows the tourist a little bit of what hard work can accomplish in our state. This tour allows the visitor to see by film, and hear by guides, how the best baseball bats in the world are made. As Kentuckians, we like to be the best, and this is one area where we are recognized throughout the world. These bats are made with the best wood, supervised by an experienced staff, and

selected by the very best athletes in the world as their bat of choice. These men are proud of their accomplishment, and it shows when you walk through the factory. This same pride is evident in many Kentuckians I know as they talk about what they are proud of themselves.

As Kentucky students, we need to have the same type of unbridled spirit as these earlier, accomplished leaders. We may not discover a new river, settle a forest, or build a new capitol building, but we can do something. For starters, we need to make sure the good education our state provides, is used to the best of our ability. We all feel a little lazy sometimes, but we want to reach our goals, so we have to always try our best. Many of us play sports. This gives us another chance to excel. For the athlete, there is no better success than a winning season, or a championship. Our state has a rich heritage of strong, athletic performers.

Whether your spirit finds itself in literature, art, adventure, sports, or creativity, Kentucky is the place to accomplish those dreams. Remember, if the United States were a person, Kentucky would be its heart. Let your spirit soar!